



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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V CORPS SOLDIERS GATHER FOR CELEBRATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE

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WIESBADEN ARMY AIRFIELD, Germany – Soldiers here celebrated Native American Indian and Alaskan Native Heritage Month with a special luncheon at the post Community Activity Center November 5, courtesy of the 141st Signal Battalion of V Corps' 1st Armored Division.



SPC SCOTT PITTILLO

From left to right, Pauleen Billie; Ella Garlets, Sgt. 1st Class Mitchelene Bigman of the 19th Support Center of V Corps' 3rd Corps Support Command; Sgt. Maj. Julia Giles, 19th Support Center; Virginia Blackwood and Sgt. Connie Wolfe of the corps' 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion pose for photos at the Native American and Alaskan Heritage Month luncheon.

The unique meal featured traditional Navaho cuisine, including fry bread, a wheat bread fried in oil.

The event's keynote speaker was Pauleen Billie, a longtime leader in the Navaho Nation who has assisted with several community development programs. Billie's remarks highlighted her

personal experiences as a member of the Navaho nation.

There are approximately 300,000 Navahos within the nation's four different clans, she explained. Billes's father was of the Tall House Clan and her mother was of the Close to the Earth Water Clan.

Bille cited her people's contribution to America and the military during World War II.

One of the Navaho nation's greatest contributions to the war effort was their language. The U.S. military used the language as a secret code to pass messages between units. The Japanese were never able to break the code of the Navaho "code talkers."

Following the meal and keynote address, Sgt. Maj. Julia Guiles and Sgt. 1st Class Mitchelene Bigman from the 19th Support Center of V Corps' 3rd Corps Support Command, performed a traditional Crow Indian dance. Bigman wore a "jingle dress" with 450 metal cones covering the garment.

